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THE ORCHESTRA IN THE CHURCH.

THE recent attempts to establish orchestral music as an integral part of our church services on special occasions—an attempt, too (be it remarked in passing), which has not been confined to our cathedrals—has naturally directed much public attention towards the important question how far the use of the orchestra is justifiable or desirable in Divine worship. We propose, in the present article, to make a few remarks on the subject.

One of the most common objections urged against the use of instruments in the service is, that it is turning the church into a concert-room. That this may, under certain circumstances, be the case, is indisputable; but the abuse of a thing not bad in itself is no valid argument against its use; and we believe it possible to join quite as devoutly in a musical service, accompanied by an orchestra, as in one in which the organ is the only instrument employed. At the recent performance of *Bach's Passion* in St. Paul's Cathedral, nothing impressed us more than the thoroughly devout and religious character of the whole service; and when the congregation around us joined heartily in the chorales (accompanied, it must be remembered, by the orchestra), we very much doubt whether any present felt as if they were taking part in a concert.

But it is said, again, that the use of a band in church is a step in the direction of Rome. The simple answer to this objection is, that the same was said by the Puritans with respect to organs; and that, in our days, many conscientious dissenters entertain the same scruples with respect to the use of a Liturgy. Rowland Hill is said to have justified the introduction of secular melodies into the singing of his congregation by saying that "he did not see why the devil should have all the best tunes;" and, without going as far as the reverend gentleman, we are certainly unable to perceive why the Roman Catholics should have all the best music. We believe that it is a duty to make the musical part of our services as perfect as means will admit; and if we are able to obtain a good orchestra, we see no reason why it should not be employed, if the worship will thereby be improved. In the old Temple service of Jerusalem a gorgeous orchestra was provided, including no less than 120 trumpets; and, though we have no desire to hear such a "brass band" within the walls of even our largest cathedral, we think that the fact is conclusive as to the lawfulness of the use of instruments in the worship of God.

It may be said, however, "Dancing, as well as instrumental music, was in use among the Jews in Divine service; if you would restore the one, why not also the other?" To this we reply, because dancing is exclusively associated with secular pursuits, in a manner in which music is not, and never has been. In introducing the orchestra, we are merely developing to its utmost perfection a most important part of our already existing form of worship. If it could be shown that the dance would in any way add to the religious element of our services, we should be ready to welcome it, provided it could be freed from worldly associations; but the cases, though presenting a superficial analogy, are in reality quite distinct.

The whole question seems to us to be one of expediency. No one would desire the restoration of the old orchestra which in many of our village churches preceded the organ, and which some of us are old enough to remember. The

"quacking" clarinet and the "grunting" bass-viol have passed away, let us hope for ever. Possibly they may yet linger in remote nooks and corners, but the race is almost if not quite extinct. We should not, under any circumstances, advocate the use of a band in small country churches or chapels. A reasonably complete orchestra would be unattainable, and one that was inadequate would be worse than none. A discordant band of incompetent performers would certainly not be conducive to devotion. But, on the other hand, we not only see no objection to a good orchestra for the festival services of our cathedrals and larger places of worship, but think it a positive benefit.

There are one or two incidental advantages which we think would accrue from the use of instruments in our churches, which we have left till the close of our article as bearing less immediately on the question under consideration. There is first the undoubted fact that, where efficient, it would make the services more attractive. We admit that this is a low motive; but it is of no use to ignore it, for it is unquestionable that many people do attend our churches drawn thither chiefly by the music; and we think it certainly better that they should come for this reason than that they should stop away altogether. Moreover, the cause of music itself is likely to derive benefit from the innovation. At present there exist but very few pieces with orchestral accompaniment suitable for an ordinary church service. But let the church orchestra itself become a recognised institution, and the demand will doubtless create the supply. The setting of the Canticles and other portions of the Liturgy would afford ample scope for the talents of our native composers; and many would doubtless avail themselves of the opportunity of trying their capabilities in this field of art, if there were but a reasonable chance of obtaining a hearing.

In conclusion we wish every success to this new movement in church music, and hope ere long to see the time when at all special festivals the orchestra in church will be as much the rule as it is now the exception.

THE NEW "COTTA" EDITION OF THE PIANO FORTE CLASSICS.

FIRST ARTICLE.

TO all students of German literature, the name of the celebrated publisher J. G. Cotta, of Stuttgart, will be familiar as a household word. The firm occupies in Germany a somewhat analogous (though perhaps even higher) position, in the literary world, to that of the house of Longmans or John Murray in this country. Cotta was the publisher for Goethe and Schiller, in whose letters frequent references will be found which show that the relations between author and publisher were of a friendly as well as of a commercial nature. So high indeed does the house stand in public estimation, that it is a common saying in Germany, of a work bearing Cotta's name on the title-page, that "es trägt den Stempel der Unsterblichkeit"—it bears the stamp of immortality.

To the large collection of classical literature issued by this celebrated firm, has now been added a collection of the masterpieces of classical music. Were this simply an ordinary edition, differing from others merely in the style of engraving, or perhaps in some slight variations of the text, we should dismiss it in a few sentences, with a passing word of commendation; but it is so different in plan from any other edition, and in many respects so unique, as to deserve a far more extended notice than we

could find space for in our review columns. It is, therefore, our intention in a series of papers to direct the notice of our readers to this remarkable publication.

We shall perhaps give the best general idea of the work as a whole by saying that it is, in the strictest sense of the word, an *annotated* edition. It will be to many of us among the recollections of our school-boy days, how often, in preparing a Latin or Greek lesson, we have been brought to a complete standstill by some knotty passage, the meaning of which we have vainly endeavoured to decipher, till, turning to the "Notes" at the end of our Virgil or Horace, we have found what—though perhaps only two or three words—has thrown a flood of light over the whole passage, and removed our difficulties, as if by magic. It is somewhat singular that it should not long ago have occurred to some clever musician to do for the "classics" of Haydn, Mozart, or Beethoven, what so many have done for the ancient authors; yet, so far as we are aware, this has not been previously done—or at least not to more than a very limited extent. Dr. Hans von Bülow, in his edition of the six sonatas of Philip Emanuel Bach, published some years since by Peters in Leipzig, has attempted something of the same nature, though on a less complete scale than the present, and with proportionately smaller results.

The works issued in this series up to the present time are—a selection from the sonatas and miscellaneous pianoforte pieces of Haydn, edited by S. Lebert, assisted by Imm. Faisst and Ignaz Lachner (two volumes); a similar selection from Mozart, edited by the same (three volumes, two of solo pieces and one of duets); the complete pianoforte works of Beethoven, excepting a few of the smaller variations, &c. (in five volumes), the earlier works, as far as Op. 51, edited by Lebert and Faisst, and the last two volumes (from Op. 53 to Op. 129) by Hans von Bülow; Weber's sonatas, and a selection from his miscellaneous pieces, edited by Liszt (two volumes); and, lastly, a selection from Schubert's pianoforte works, also edited by Liszt.

Before proceeding to notice in detail the different volumes of this edition—which, we ought to mention, is appropriately entitled "*Instructive Edition of Classical Pianoforte Works*"—it will be well if, to give our readers a thorough insight into the scope and aim of the publication, we translate a portion of the interesting preface to the first volume. Herr Lebert, the responsible editor of the whole series, says:—

"The '*Instructive Edition of Classical Pianoforte Works*,' the publication of which we herewith begin, is in no way designed merely to add to the various editions of such works, whose services in the general diffusion of the classics we by no means dispute, yet another which shall rival them in cheapness or beauty of engraving, perhaps also in correct and faithful reproduction of the originals. The present has rather, as its name declares, a specially *instructive* aim. It will present the masterpieces of the classical composers for the piano in a form which shall give to all who concern themselves with piano-playing, in the most various degrees of proficiency, whether as pupils or teachers, the greatest possible *direction* and *assistance* for an artistically correct performance of the text, as well as for a right intellectual appreciation, and a suitable performance.

"For this purpose the original text has been carefully revised and fixed from the best editions. . . . Herewith also the closest attention has been especially given to the embellishments (*Verzierungen*). These—especially with the older composers, in whose works, as is known, they play a very important part—are frequently presented, both in writing and in print, so inaccurately, irregularly, and unsystematically, that even the soundest musicians will often be uncertain about them. We, on the contrary, give them everywhere in such a manner that no doubt can arise as to the way in which, in our opinion, they are to be performed. To attain this, we write the embellishments partly in the text itself, in large notes—especially the many appoggiaturas (*langen Vorschläge*) in the old masters, the original method of writing which, in small notes, is

now somewhat antiquated—but for the most part we keep the small notes, &c., in the original text, but explain it by giving the method of performance in smaller text above, or in a foot-note."

It is unnecessary to enlarge upon this important feature of the edition. Few masters, who have taught Haydn's or Mozart's sonatas to their pupils, have not experienced the difficulty of making the young players perform the embellishments correctly, to say nothing of the doubt they have sometimes themselves felt as to the accurate interpretation of the signs employed. The way in which this promise of the preface is carried out in the text is worthy of all praise. We can bear out the editor in his statement that in no single instance (so far as our examination of the volumes has gone) is a passage to be found, the manner of executing which is not as clear as it is possible for notes to make it.

Herr Lebert next speaks of the new indications of *Phrasing* as one of the special features of this edition. On this point he says:—

"In this matter, again, the works of the older composers more especially offer a rich field for more accurate fixing and regulating. In them by preference so much is left to the discretion of the player, and where there are indications of legato and staccato, these are so dubious, irregular, and without agreement in analogous passages, that it is not only almost impossible for the pupil, but it also often costs the teacher and player of experience and good taste much comparison and many experiments, to hit upon the right reading. But even more recent composers, whose method of marking these and similar points is altogether far more accurate, often leave considerable room for more careful indications, which, at least to the more unpractised and less gifted, cannot be otherwise than profitable."

The editor then proceeds to explain the system he has adopted, and, with becoming modesty, expressly states that he lays no claim to having given the absolutely right reading; for there are many cases in which different methods of performance may possibly be equally good; all he professes to give is a version consistent with itself, and in keeping with the artistic character of the music.

After touching on the dynamic marks of expression, the metronomic indications, and the carefully and fully marked fingering, Herr Lebert continues:—

"Through the system of editing which has been thus explained, which presents everything serviceable for practical performance as far as possible in the commonly understood musical signs and expressions, and therefore does not merely consist of circumstantial explanations in exceptional cases, we hope to add to the works of the classical writers for the piano a *practical commentary*, which on the one hand for the self-teaching, who must dispense with *vivâ voce* instruction, gives information in writing as to the requisites and means of a good performance; and which, on the other hand, will save the teacher a large amount of time and trouble, which he must otherwise spend in marking, fingering, explaining marks of expression, &c., and which he can now profitably employ in other ways."

Our readers will now be prepared to follow us in our subsequent papers through this series, and to see in what way the promises of the preface are carried out. We have only, in concluding this article, to give expression to a regret in which many will doubtless sympathise with us. It is that so valuable a scheme should have been adopted only in a *German* edition. For the full appreciation and understanding of the instructions given, a knowledge of the German language is indispensable. Still, the want of this knowledge should not prevent students from obtaining these volumes, since even to those unacquainted with that tongue the series will be of great service. The fingering will of course be intelligible, as also the directions for the performance of the embellishments. This is above and before all a *student's* edition, and to students in the general sense of the term, and not in the limited acceptance of learners, we recommend it.

(To be continued.)

A PRIZE-DAY AT THE PARIS CONSERVATOIRE.

(TRANSLATED FROM HECTOR BERLIOZ'S "AUTOBIOGRAPHY.")

(Continued from p. 31.)

[TRANSLATOR'S NOTE.—In a previous number of this paper, Berlioz's account was given of the general conditions under which prizes are awarded at the Paris Conservatoire. The present extract from his entertaining memoirs refers to the occasion on which he was himself the successful competitor.]

Two months later, the distribution of prizes and the performance with full orchestra of the successful cantata took place as usual at the Institute. This ceremony still goes on in the same fashion. Every year the same musicians perform scores which also are always nearly the same, and the prizes, given with the same discernment, are distributed with the same solemnity. Every year, the same day, at the same hour, standing on the same step of the same platform of the Institute, the same academicien repeats the same phrase to the laureate who has just been crowned. The day is the first Saturday in October; the hour, four in the afternoon; the step of the platform, the third; the academicien, every one knows; the phrase, as follows:—

"Well, young man, *maître animo*; you are about to make a fine journey . . . the classic land of the fine arts . . . the country of Pergolesi, of Piccini . . . a sky that gives inspiration. . . You will return to us with some magnificent score. . . You have a fine prospect."

For this glorious day the academiciens don their fine robes embroidered with green; they are radiant; they are dazzling. They are going to crown in pomp a painter, a sculptor, an architect, an engraver, and a musician. Great is the joy within the Muses' Hall.

What have I been writing there? That is like a verse! The fact is that I was already far away from the Academy, and was thinking (I really don't know apropos of what) of this verse of Victor Hugo:—

"Aigle qu'ils devaient suivre, aigle de notre armée,
Dont la plume sanglante en cent lieux est semée,
Dont le tonnerre, un soir, s'éteignit dans les flots,
Toi, que les as couvés dans l'aire maternelle,
Regarde et sois contente, et crie, et bats de l'aile,
Mère, tes aiglons sont éclos."

Let us return to our laureates, several of whom are somewhat like owls, those "little pouting monsters" of whom La Fontaine speaks, rather than eagles, but who equally share, nevertheless, the affections of the Academy.

It is, then, on the first Saturday in October that the radiant mother "flaps her wings," and that the cantata which has been crowned is at last performed seriously. For this occasion is assembled a *complete* orchestra; nothing is wanting. The strings are there; we see the two flutes, the two oboes, the two clarinets.—(I ought, however, in truth to say that this precious part of the orchestra has only recently been made complete. When the morning of the prize-day dawned for me, there was only a *clarinet and a half*; the old man entrusted from time immemorial with the first clarinet part, having only one tooth left, could only bring out of his asthmatical instrument half the notes at most.) There were the four horns, the three trombones, and even cornets, modern instruments! This was "doing the grand!" Well, nothing is more true. The Academy for this day does not know herself; she commits follies, real extravagancies; "she is content, and cries, and flaps her wings; her owls (her "eaglets," I mean) are hatched." Every one is at his post. The conductor, bow in hand, gives the signal.

The sun rises: violoncello solo—slight crescendo.

The little birds awake: flute solo, shakes on the violins.

The little brooks murmur: solo for violas.

The little lambs bleat: oboe solo.

And the crescendo continuing, we find, when the little birds, the little brooks, and the little lambs have been successively heard, that the sun is at the zenith, and it is midday at least. The recitative begins—

"Déjà le jour naissant," &c.

Then follow the first air, the second recitative, the second air, the third recitative and the third air, when the personage generally expires, but the singer and the audience respire. The perpetual secretary pronounces in a loud and intelligible voice the Christian name and surname of the author, holding in one hand the crown of artificial laurel which is to encircle the temples of the victor, and in the other a medal of real gold, which will serve to pay his expenses before his departure for Rome. It is worth a hundred and sixty francs, I am certain. The laureate rises:

"Son front nouveau tondue, symbole de candeur,
Rougit, en approchant, d'une honnête pudeur."

He embraces the perpetual secretary. Slight applause. A few paces from the tribune of the perpetual secretary is the illustrious master of the pupil who is crowned; the pupil embraces his illustrious master; quite right! Slight applause again. On a bench in front, behind the academiciens, the parents of the laureate are silently shedding tears of joy; he, jumping over the benches of the amphitheatre, treading on one person's toes, stepping on another's dress, throws himself into the arms of his father and mother, who now sob aloud—nothing more natural! But there is no more applause; the public begins to laugh. On the right of the scene of tears, a young lady is making signs to the hero of the festival. He needs no entreaty, and, tearing on his passage the gauze dress of a lady, knocking out of shape the hat of a dandy, he at last reaches his cousin. He embraces his cousin. Sometimes he even embraces his cousin's neighbour. Great laughter. Another woman, sitting in a corner dark and difficult of access, gives some marks of sympathy that the happy victor takes care to notice. He flies to embrace also his mistress, his intended, his betrothed, her who is to share his glory. But in his hurry and his indifference for other women, he overturns one with a kick, catches his foot against a bench, falls heavily, and without going any further, giving up all thought of the least embrace for the poor young girl, regains his place, perspiring and confused. This time tremendous applause, peals of laughter; it is happiness; it is delirium; it is the best moment of the academic *séance*; and I know a good number of merry souls who only go there for this. I am not speaking thus from any spite against the laughers, because for my part I had, when my turn came, neither father, nor mother, nor cousin, nor master, nor mistress to embrace. My master was ill, my parents absent and displeased; as for my mistress . . . And so I only embraced the perpetual secretary, and doubt whether as I approached him a blush could be remarked on my forehead; for instead of being "newly shorn," it was buried beneath a forest of long red hair, which, with other characteristic features, would contribute not a little to make me rank in the class of owls.

I was, besides, on that day not at all in an embracing humour; I even think that I was never in a more horrible rage in all my life. This is why: the subject of the cantata was "The Last Night of Sardanapalus." The poem finished at the moment when the conquered Sardanapalus calls his most beautiful slaves and mounts with them on the funeral pile. The idea occurred to me at first to write a sort of symphony descriptive of the conflagration, the cries of the ill-resigned women, the proud

accents of the brave voluptuary, defying death in the midst of the progress of the flame, and the crash of the falling palace. But when I came to think of the means to employ to render perceptible with the orchestra alone the principal features of a picture of this nature, I stopped. The musical section of the Academy would have condemned, without a doubt, my whole score at the mere inspection of this instrumental finale; besides, as nothing could be more unintelligible when reduced for performance on the piano, it became at least useless to write it. So I waited. When subsequently the prize had been awarded me, sure then of not being able to lose it, and besides of its being performed with full orchestra, I wrote my conflagration. This movement, at the full rehearsal, produced such an effect that several of the academicians, taken by surprise, came themselves to compliment me on it, without reservation, and without bitterness for the trap in which I had just caught their musical religion.

The hall of the public meetings of the Institute was full of artists and amateurs, curious to hear this cantata, the author of which had already established a proud reputation for extravagance. The larger number, as they went out, expressed the astonishment that the "conflagration" had caused them, and by the account they gave of this strange piece of symphonic music, the curiosity and attention of the audience of the morrow, who had not been at the rehearsal, were naturally excited to no ordinary degree.

At the beginning of the meeting, having some little doubts of the capability of Grasset, the ex-conductor of the Théâtre Italien, who was directing the music, I placed myself at his side, my manuscript in my hand. Mme. Malibran, attracted also by the reports of the previous day, and who had not been able to find a place in the hall, was seated on a stool near me, between two double-basses. I saw her that day for the last time.

My decrescendo begins.

(As the cantata commenced with the line "Déjà la nuit a voilé la nature," I had to depict a *sunset* instead of the customary sunrise. I seem condemned never to do anything like other people—to take life and the Academy *against the grain*!)

The cantata goes on without an accident. Sardanapalus learns his defeat, resolves to die, calls his wives; the fire is lit, all listen; those who have been initiated at the rehearsal say to their neighbours, "Now you will hear this crash; it is strange, it is prodigious!"

Five hundred thousand curses on musicians who do not count their rests!!! A horn part gave in my score the cue to the drums, the drums gave it to the cymbals, these to the big drum, and the first stroke on the big drum brought on the final explosion! My — d horn never sounds its note; the drums, not hearing it, take care not to come in; consequently the cymbals and big drum are silent also; nothing comes in! nothing!!! the violins and basses continue by themselves their impotent tremolo; no explosion! A conflagration which goes out without having blazed up, a ridiculous effect instead of the crash so much spoken of; *ridiculus mus*! . . . It is only a composer that has undergone such a trial who can conceive the fury with which I was transported. A cry of horror escaped from my heaving breast; I hurled my score across the orchestra; I upset two desks; Mme. Malibran jumped up as if a mine had suddenly exploded under her feet; all was in an uproar, the orchestra, and the scandalised academicians, and the mystified audience, and the indignant friends of the composer. It was one more musical catastrophe, and more cruel than any I had previously experienced. . . If it had only been my last!

HANS VON BÜLOW.

WHEN an artist of such repute as Dr. Hans von Bülow comes among us for the first time, something more seems due to him, as well as to our readers, than a mere record of what he has played, and the impression made both upon ourselves and his hearers generally.

Hans von Bülow was born at Dresden on the 8th of January, 1830. His father, Edouard von Bülow, was a well-known author, and friend of the celebrated Ludwig Tieck. Up to his ninth year he evinced not the slightest turn for music, but after a dangerous brain fever this so rapidly developed itself, that at eleven years of age he was able to play Beethoven's trio in C minor. Without any view to adopting music as a profession, he received his first instruction in pianoforte playing from A. Hänsel, then from Fräulein Schmiedel, and on this lady marrying Herr C. Eberwein, in harmony and counterpoint from him. In 1845 he was placed under Friedrich Wieck, the father and instructor of Mme. Schumann, and subsequently, for a short time, under Herr Litolf, at this time resident in Dresden. At this period Mmes. Schröder-Devrient and Johanna Wagner, and MM. Tichatschek and Mitterwurzer, were at the height of their career; Wagner directed the opera, bringing out the masterworks of Gluck, Weber, Beethoven, &c., as well as the earlier of his own works—*Rienzi*, *Der Fliegende Holländer*, and *Tannhäuser*. This happy and healthy condition of musical affairs he was soon obliged to relinquish, in consequence of his father's removal to Stuttgart. Here he became a pupil of the Gymnasium, and in due course entered the University of Leipzig with a view, in accordance with his parents' wish, to studying law. In Leipzig he resided with Professor Frege, husband of the celebrated singer Livia Gerhard, the friend of Mendelssohn and Schumann, whose house was the head-quarters of the chief musical celebrities of the day. Here he made acquaintance with Mendelssohn and Schumann, and received instruction in counterpoint from Moritz Hauptmann. Thence, however, he proceeded to Berlin to continue his legal studies. During a visit to Weimar, in 1850, he had the good luck to hear *Lohengrin*, under Liszt's direction. This made such an impression upon him that he at once gave up all idea of the law as a profession, and determined to devote himself to music. He betook himself at once to Wagner, then residing at Zurich, who procured for him the post of musical director of the theatre there, and initiated him in the art of conducting. After awhile, at Wagner's advice, he removed to Weimar, and put himself under Liszt's tuition, with a view to perfecting himself in pianoforte playing. Under Liszt's guidance he made extraordinary progress, and having qualified himself for appearance in public, started on an artistic tour in the spring of 1853, and gave concerts with the greatest success in Vienna, Pesth, Dresden, Karlsruhe, Bremen, Hamburg, and Berlin. After a short stay in Dresden, where he also occupied himself in literary work, writing articles for the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, &c., and after fulfilling an engagement as pianoforte teacher in a private family in Posen, he took up his abode in Berlin, when he at once received the appointment of principal professor of the pianoforte in the music school founded by A. B. Marx and Julius Stern, a post which he held from 1855 till 1864. During his residence here he instituted concerts both for chamber and orchestral music, and from time to time made tours through the most important cities of Germany, France, Belgium, Holland, and Russia, appearing both as an executant and as a conductor. It was, however, during his residence in Munich—from 1864 to 1869—that his artistic activity was most apparent. Here he not only filled the part of principal of the Con-

servatorium, but that also of conductor of the opera, bringing out *Tristan und Isolde* (1865), *Die Meistersinger* (1868), five other new operas, and twelve newly-revived ones. In 1869 overwork and failing health led him to seek a release from his duties, and since that time he has made Florence his head-quarters, working hard here, and successfully, to foster a taste for German music, but taking occasional artistic journeys, the most important of which in its results was that of last autumn, when he revisited Munich for the purpose of reviving *Tristan und Isolde*.

As a composer, Von Bülow cannot be said to have been prolific, his published works as yet not having gone beyond Op. 23. Earnestness and originality, however, largely characterise them all. Among the most important are his so-called "Symphonisches Stimmungsbild," *Nirwana* (Op. 20), "Des Sängers Fluch," a ballad for orchestra (Op. 16), an overture and music to Shakespeare's *Julius Cæsar* (Op. 10), and four "Character-Stücke" for orchestra (Op. 23). Besides songs, both for solo voices and chorus, he has published nine books of pianoforte music. But his critical and instructive editions of the works of standard authors, his arrangements and transcriptions, far outnumber his own compositions. Here we find he has busied himself with Gluck, Ph. E. Bach, S. Bach, Handel, Scarlatti, Beethoven, Weber, &c., perhaps the most noteworthy among them being his critical and instructive edition of Beethoven's pianoforte works from Op. 53 to Op. 129. Further he is the author of the pianoforte score of Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*, and of Gluck's *Iphigénie in Aulis*, as rescored by Wagner, as well as of arrangements and transcriptions of a vast number of orchestral works by Wagner, Berlioz, and Liszt.

As an executant Von Bülow is unrivalled. Every quality that a pianist should possess, he possesses in the highest degree. Most conspicuous among his characteristics are his perfect mastery over the key-board, his un-failing memory, his thorough intimacy with every school of pianoforte music, from Bach to the present day, the individuality of his reading of classical works, and an entire absence of conventionality. The strength of wrist and finger, which enables him to extract from his instrument the utmost volume of sound of which it is capable, the most delicate *pianissimo*, and every gradation of tone which lies between these extremes, must be prodigious. With apparently an unlimited amount of reserve force at his command, the most intensely difficult passages seem to be overcome with perfect ease. The pure vocal tone he brings forth in *cantabile* passages is truly astonishing. The full importance of every phrase, every note of each piece that he plays, seems to have been duly weighed beforehand, but without detracting from its spontaneity or its poetical and intellectual conception as a whole. In its finished artistry his playing reminds us of nothing so much as Jenny Lind's singing, which some who were inclined to be hypercritical, were wont to underrate, on account of its artistic ultra-perfection. In short, Von Bülow seems to have brought the art of pianoforte playing to its extreme limits. Of the various occasions on which he has appeared we have spoken in another column.

OVERTURE TO "TANNHÄUSER."

TRANSLATED FROM WAGNER'S "PROGRAMMATISCHE ERLÄUTERUNGEN."

AT the commencement the orchestra represents the song of pilgrims, which, as it approaches, grows louder and louder, and at length recedes. It is twilight; the last

strain of the pilgrims' song is heard. As night comes on, magical phenomena present themselves; a roseate-hued and fragrant mist arises, wafting voluptuous shouts of joy to our ears; we are made aware of the dizzy motion of a horribly wanton dance. These are the seductive magic spells of the "Venusberg," which at the hour of night reveal themselves to those whose breasts are inflamed with unholy desire. Attracted by these enticing phenomena, a tall and manly figure approaches; it is Tannhäuser, the Minnesinger. Proudly exulting, he trolls forth his jubilant love-song, as if to challenge the wanton magic crew to turn their attention to himself. Wild shouts respond to his call; the roseate cloud surrounds him more closely; its enrapturing fragrance overwhelms him and intoxicates his brain. Endowed now with supernatural powers of vision, he perceives, in the dim seductive light spread out before him, an unspeakably lovely female figure; he hears a voice which, with its tremulous sweetness, sounds like the call of sirens, promising to the brave the fulfilment of his wildest wishes. It is Venus herself whom he sees before him. Heart and soul he burns with desire; hot consuming longing inflames the blood in his veins; by an irresistible power he is drawn into the presence of the goddess, and with the highest rapture raises his song in her praise. As if in response to his magic call, the wonder of the "Venusberg" is revealed to him in its fullest brightness; boisterous shouts of wild delight re-echo on every side; Bacchantes rush hither and thither in their drunken revels; and dragging Tannhäuser into their giddy dance, deliver him over to the love-warm arms of the goddess, who, passionately embracing him, carries him off, drunken with joy, to the unapproachable depths of her invisible kingdom. The wild through then disperses and their commotion ceases. A voluptuous plaintive whirring alone now stirs the air, and a horrible murmur pervades the spot where the enrapturing profane magic spell had shown itself, and which now again is overshadowed by darkness. Day at length begins to dawn, and the song of the returning pilgrims is heard in the distance. As their song draws nearer, and day succeeds to night, that whirring and murmuring in the air, which but just now sounded to us like the horrible wail of the damned, gives way to more joyful strains, till at last, when the sun has risen in all its splendour, and the pilgrims' song with mighty inspiration proclaims to the world and to all that is and lives salvation won, its surging sound swells into a rapturous torrent of sublime ecstasy. This divine song represents to us the shout of joy at his release from the curse of the unholiness of the "Venusberg." Thus all the pulses of life palpitate and leap for joy in this song of deliverance; and the two divided elements, spirit and mind, God and nature, embrace each other in the holy uniting kiss of Love.

Foreign Correspondence.

MUSIC IN NORTH GERMANY.

(FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.)

LEIPZIG, May, 1873.

WINTER, and with it the concerts, are gone. During summer now and then musical entertainments, mostly for charitable purposes, take place; but they offer so little of interest or importance that we do not feel called upon to speak about them. In many such cases the quantity in the programmes must compensate the listener for the quality and the execution of the music contributed; and an audience ready to be victimised is at times compelled

to accept performances, which could only dare to show themselves in public under the cover of Christian charity, and which the critic is bound to treat with particular consideration on account of the good purpose. Such concerts are mostly without orchestral performances, orchestral players not being easily brought together without payment. On the other hand, the programmes become all the more diversified in colour, since the well-meaning concert-givers, in order to attract the largest possible audience, are often less influenced by æsthetic considerations in selecting and combining the separate numbers of the programme, than by the principle, "Wer vieles bringt, wird jedem Etwas bringen."*

But if such artists as Herr and Frau Joachim, Carl Reinecke, Gura, Hegar, and others of the highest standing join together for a concert to be given towards a testimonial for the composer Robert Franz, who unfortunately has now almost totally lost his hearing, and if they only bring forward compositions by Robert Franz and Joh. Seb. Bach, we can look forward to both the pecuniary and artistic success of this concert with the most favourable expectations. This concert is to take place shortly here at the Gewandhaus Hall, and will doubtless be an interesting interruption of our musical summer rest.

We almost fear that the name of this unfortunate composer is not so generally known as should be the case, judging from the worth of his numerous compositions. Perhaps this is accounted for by the centre of gravity of the artistic activity of Robert Franz being the Lied—the Lied, which, through the words of the poet, is confined to one country, a zone as far as the language reaches, and which can only pass into other countries if fitting words in foreign languages have been found for the melodies of the composer. We do not know whether the songs by Robert Franz are known in England and sung to English words, but we do know that of the 250 German poems which Robert Franz has set to music, by far the greatest number deserve to be sung in every country. This, however, is not likely to be the case soon; even in its own mother country, the music by Robert Franz is at present only appreciated to its full extent in a rather small, limited circle, and we can scarcely think that the songs by Robert Franz, these flowers of a pure and innermost feeling, are ever likely to enjoy a large and general popularity. Their expression does not speak to the public in general, and for this reason they are not favourite pieces of touring tenors or starring prima-donnas. It is true these songs are mostly not appropriate for performance at public concerts. It is the true "household music." But wherever proper interpreters of Franz's songs are to be found, this true German lyric cannot fail to be appreciated.

From the programme of the second public examination concert of the Conservatoire, we can point out two young Englishmen as having enjoyed a highly creditable success. They were Messrs. John Jeffery, from Plymouth, and George Frederick Hatton, from London. Mr. Jeffery has been for some time in Leipzig, and proved, by the performance of the two last movements of Beethoven's E-flat major concerto, that he has become a very excellent pianist. Mr. George Frederick Hatton has only come to our institute some seven months ago, and this school has only a small share, in proportion, in his excellent musical education. The gifted young man is the son of the famous English composer J. L. Hatton, who is also most favourably known in Germany. Provided, through his father's profound instructions with an excellent knowledge, the highly-gifted youth came to us, and showed, in his performance of the

first movement of Beethoven's G major concerto, that he knew how to make use of the short time he has been here. For both these young artists we can make the most favourable prognostication for the future.

As competitors for the "Moscheles scholarship," the two ladies, Miss Dora Schirmacher, from Liverpool, and Fräulein Franziska Schlesinger, from Bernburg, appeared at this concert. The ladies played the concerto in G minor by Moscheles, Fräulein Schirmacher the first and Fräulein Schlesinger the second and third movements, with good technique, but not so that we could declare them to have quite finished their artistic education.

MUSIC IN VIENNA.]

(FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.)

VIENNA, May 12th, 1873.

THE Great Exhibition is opened! There is another concert now, performed by all the people on earth. In comparison to the opening of the London Exhibition, music had little share in our festival. Save the national hymn, it was only the chorus, "See the conquering hero comes," with specially adapted words, which preceded the usual speeches (the "Hallelujah" from the *Messiah* was proposed, but laid aside). The series of concerts, which in other years closed at Easter-time, prolonged its farewell this year, and could not yet find the exit of the season. After a concert for the benefit of the poor of Vienna, given with the co-operation of Mme. Patti, we had a miscellaneous performance in the Opera House, for the benefit of the widows and orphans of the officers of the army (the price of the stalls being at the height of a hundred florins each); and the other evenings were followed by a state concert, and a festival representation of Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream* with the music of Mendelssohn, given in the Opera House on the occasion of the marriage of the Archduchess Gisela. The last days in April, some artists on the piano, organ, violin, and clarinet had the courage to risk each a concert of doubtful success. A private concert, for the benefit of the surviving relatives of a deserving musician, was interesting from the co-operation of some members of the aristocracy, particularly the Countess Wickenburg-Almásy, a singer of fine taste and good method. The receipt of about three thousand florins was therefore remarkable, as the concert-room was but a small one, and the lovers of music in general were already tired of the prolonged season. The third and last production of the pupils of the Conservatoire offered only theatrical representations of opera scenes. It must be confessed that the capacities of the pupils, on the stage and in the orchestra, were likewise an honour to Mme. Marchesi, the professor of the singing-class, and to Herr Hellmesberger, the Director of the Institute and conductor of the performance. Such singers as Frl. Elise Wiedermann, Clementine Prohaska (Proska), Louise Proch, Herr Staudigl, will become in a short time a valuable assistance to the opera and the concert. The four ladies of the Conservatoire in Stockholm, the Swedish sing-quartet, have finished their visit with the tenth concert. Ten appearances in so short a time, and every one so well visited, speaks for itself. Though the extent of their programme was very small, the audience never became tired. At intervals the ladies visited also Pesth, Graz, Brünn. Going next to Munich, the quartet intends, after a visit to Sweden, to make a tour through America, now the Holy Land for so many artists. Two so-called festival concerts, on the occasion of the opening of the Exhibition, were arranged by the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde. Both were given

* "Who brings much will bring something for everybody."

by the united forces of the Singverein, the Philharmonic, and the Wiener-Männer-Gesangverein. Regarding the Schubert concert, it was again evident that it is a failure to fill the programme with works of the same composer. The audience seemed, indeed, a little tired, though the orchestral and choral productions and solo songs were so well performed. With Beethoven it was another thing; the vigour and variety of the compositions are sufficient in themselves even to raise the attention number by number. The Leonore overture, No. 3, in the beginning, and the "Ninth" at the end of the programme, held the rest between them like iron cramps.

Mme. Adelina Patti and the Italian opera have vanished from the Theater an der Wien on the 2nd of May. There were seventeen performances, the last a miscellaneous one. Eight operas showed the versatility of the celebrated Diva, and as many more operas could not be represented for want of a basso-buffo. We heard *La Traviata*, *Il Trovatore*, *La Sonnambula*, *I Puritani*, *Rigoletto*, *Lucia*, *Martha*, and *Dinorah*, and the last opera created the same enthusiasm as the first, regarding Mme. Patti. Compared to such an eminent singer, the other members of the company, such as Signora Marchisio, Signore Graziani, Nicolini, Naudin, Marini, and Vidal, can only claim a secondary interest. The operettas given in the same theatre, in the Leopoldstadt, and in the Strampfer theatre, are for the most part those of Offenbach, Lecocq, Suppé, and Strauss. The composer, Emile Jonas, whose *Canard à trois becs* and *Javotte* have attained a certain popularity, is again here, to produce a new operetta in the Strampfer theatre; the same Mr. Strampfer has got the licence to build a new theatre in the suburb Mariahilf (on the way to Schönbrunn).

The Imperial Opera House has been upon the point of losing its director, the highly esteemed Herr Johann (now "Ritter von") Herbeck, who was seized for the second time by a dangerous inflammation of the lungs. The performances represent now, too, a sort of exhibition of guests; one or two every second evening replace the regular members, save one guest, who is indeed a help in need, namely a fioritura singer, a part lately represented by Frl. v. Rabatinsky. It is Frau Schroeder-Hanfstängl, from the Hoftheater in Stuttgart, whose Gastspiel is particularly arranged with the view of her singing Ophelia in *Hamlet*; meanwhile she performed Philine, Isabella, and Gilda. She has much skill in concert passages, and an excellent shake; but the voice is too thin for our Opera House. Till now, perhaps on account of a temporary indisposition, she was not very fortunate. None of her rôles could satisfy. Frl. Löwe, from Prague, has performed Elsa, Leonore (*Fidelio*), and Senta. Her voice has some sympathetic chords, but is not technically schooled enough, and the higher notes are a little harsh. Frl. Löwe is, however, a conscientious singer and acts well, and her appearance is very favourable for the stage. Herr Degerle, from Dresden, who performed Wolfram, Telramund, and Valentin, is an intelligent singer, who certainly will not spoil his rôle. The basso, Herr Scaria, till now announced as a guest, though he is actually engaged, deserves much praise. It is a pity that his vocalisation is so very unequal, and the declamation sometimes too broad. The operas are now much visited by the Imperial court and its interesting guests, among whom are the Prince of Wales, Prince Arthur, the German Crown Prince, the Princes of Denmark and Saxe, the Dukes of Brunswick and Nassau, and many other members of first rank, who all seem to be enraptured with the beauty of the decorations of the great Opera House. From the 13th of April (Easter Sunday) till the 12th of May, the operas represented

have been as follows:—*Freischütz*, *Don Juan*, *Füdin*, *Lucrezia*, *Tannhäuser*, *Dom Sebastian*, *Romeo und Julia*, *Faust*, *Afrikanerin*, *Waffenschmied*, *Lohengrin*, *Mignon*, *Fidelio*, *Robert*, *Profet*, *Fliegende Holländer*, *Rigoletto*, *Hans Heiling*.

INAUGURATION OF THE GRAND ORGAN AT THE TOWN HALL, BOMBAY.

(*Times of India*, April 30th, 1873.)

THE grand Town Hall organ—the noble gift to Bombay of Sir Albert Sassoon, in commemoration of the Duke of Edinburgh's visit to this city in 1870—was inaugurated on Tuesday, April 29th, with a brilliant concert, of which, as a matter of course, the instrumental portion was the leading feature. The large hall was not more than half filled; but considering the advanced condition of the season, and the fact that everybody who can get away has left the steaming city for the cool breezes and health-restoring glades of Mahabeshwur and Matheran, a larger audience could hardly have been expected. Those, however, who had the good fortune to be present enjoyed a delicious intellectual treat, which would preserve them, at all events for the moment, from envying those perhaps still more fortunate ones who about the same time might be supposed to be listening to the song of the bulbul on the distant breezy hills. Additional interest was lent to the concert by the fact that Mr. Charles Frye, the organist of St. Paul's Cathedral, Calcutta—an accomplished performer on the organ—had been specially invited to assist on the occasion; while Mr. Bishop, the son of the builder of the organ, and Mr. Cope, the honorary organist of St. Thomas's Cathedral, made up a trio which, for talent and ability, could not easily be surpassed. The vocalists—Mr. Constable, Mr. Punnett, and Mr. Sevastopulo—are popular favourites among the music-loving public here; in short, it may safely be said that the organ was inaugurated with the best vocal and instrumental talent available. The programme, the selection of which displayed a cultivated taste, was as follows:—

| | | | | |
|-----------------|------------------------------------|--------------|-------|------------------|
| Organ Solo. | "Offertoire" in G.. | Wely | ..... | Mr. Bishop. |
| Do. | "Andante" | Batiste | ..... | Mr. Frye. |
| Bass Solo.. | "Pro peccatis" | Rossini | ..... | Mr. Punnett. |
| Organ Solo. | Entr'acte, "Rosamunde" | Schubert | ..... | Mr. Cope. |
| Do. | "If with all your hearts" | Mendelssohn | ..... | Mr. Frye. |
| Tenor Solo. | "Comfort ye" and "Every valley" | Handel | ..... | Mr. Constable. |
| Organ Solo. | "Andante" from the Violin Concerto | Mendelssohn | ..... | Mr. Bishop. |
| Do. | "Marche aux Flambeaux" | Scotts Clark | ..... | Mr. Cope. |
| Bass Solo | "Stradella" | ..... | ..... | Mr. Sevastopulo. |
| Organ Solo. | Wedding March | Mendelssohn | ..... | Mr. Frye. |

Mr. Bishop played the opening piece with much ability. Batiste's *Andante*, which followed, abundantly fulfilled all expectations that had been formed of Mr. Frye's power over the instrument. His rendering was masterly, and the peculiar merit of the selection enabled him to display to perfection the solo stops. Mr. Punnett then sang the "Pro peccatis" of Rossini, in the vigorous style with which we are all so well acquainted, and which won for him well-merited applause. The manner in which Mr. Cope played the *entr'acte* from "Rosamunde," one of the most lightsome of Schubert's compositions, was much admired, and tended to show that the Cathedral organ is at present in most capable hands. Mr. Frye then played the exquisite solo, "If with all your hearts," from Mendelssohn's "Elijah." Mr. Constable, who followed with "Comfort ye" and "Every valley," needs no praise from us. He possesses a splendid tenor voice, and sings with the precision and confidence of a trained musician; but the forest of flags with which the roof of the hall was decorated prevented his notes from ringing so clearly through the building as they would otherwise have done. At the conclusion of his solo he was cheered to the echo. The *Andante* from Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto was skilfully rendered by Mr. Bishop; and then Mr. Cope thoroughly roused the audience with his splendid playing of the "Marche aux Flambeaux." He showed the immense volume of tone which the organ can send forth, and on behalf of the hall let it be said that not the faintest echo was experienced. Mr. Sevastopulo's solo was very good, but would have sounded much better had the afore-mentioned flags been out of the way. Mr. Frye brought the concert to a close with Mendelssohn's "Wedding March," which was finely played, and above all criticism.

Sir Albert Sassoon has rendered an inestimable service to his

fellow-citizens. How many hundreds of persons will be constantly brought together to hear this superb organ!—of how much community of sentiment and good-fellowship it may become the parent!—for what can more completely knit soul to soul than the associated enjoyment of the sublimest music?

The *Indian Statesman* says: "Sir Albert lays us under deep obligation by this munificent gift. The presentation was suggested, if we remember rightly, by our fellow-townsmen, Mr. H. Mull, of the *Times of India*."

Reviews.

Die Walküre. Von RICHARD WAGNER. *Clavierauszug* (The Valkyr. By RICHARD WAGNER. Pianoforte score). London: Schott & Co.

IN our last number we gave some account of the *Rheingold*, the introduction to Wagner's great "Nibelungen" trilogy. It is now our duty to notice the first portion of the work itself. Before, however, we give an account of the plot and music it may be well to explain the meaning of the title, as it is probable that a large number of our readers have not the faintest idea of what a "Walküre" is. The name is derived from two old German words—*wal*, those slain in battle, and *küren*, to select—and the "Walküren" are nine sisters, the daughters of Wotan, whose duty it is to bring the warriors slain in battle into the "Walhalla," the castle which, it will be remembered, the giants had built for Wotan; and upon the transactions connected with which the action of the *Rheingold* mostly turns. The chief of the nine Walküren is Brinnhilde; she is "The Valkyr" *par excellence*, who gives her name to the present piece, and is also the principal heroine of the two following dramas, *Siegfried* and *Götterdämmerung*. This explanation being given, we can now proceed to notice the plot of the work. At first sight it will appear but slightly connected with that of the *Rheingold*, but when we come to the *Siegfried* the relation between the previous pieces will be much more apparent.

So far as at present developed, the "Nibelungen" drama has dealt entirely with the mythical and supernatural. In the first act of *Die Walküre* human interest is introduced for the first time. We are dealing, it is true, with people of the old heroic age, not with nineteenth-century ladies and gentlemen, and, as we shall see, the romantic and supernatural is not altogether left in the background. Still, after all, we have here men and women of like passions with ourselves, and the interest of the drama is thereby considerably enhanced. It is a striking thing, too, that precisely in those parts of the drama in which Wagner treats the ordinary human passions of love, hate, &c., is he the most powerful and impressive.

The instrumental prelude to *Die Walküre*, like that of the *Rheingold*, is one of those pieces of which it is impossible to form an adequate idea from the pianoforte arrangement. It is mainly constructed upon a simple subject of two bars repeated and varied in every conceivable way, and depicting in a masterly manner the rising of a storm and its gradual subsidence. The tempest in the orchestra dies away, and with its last notes the curtain rises. We see the interior of a singularly constructed house. In the middle of the room stands the trunk of a mighty ash; we see its enormous roots losing themselves in the ground; to the trunk a rough roof is fixed, through openings in which we see the spreading branches of the tree above; the walls are of roughly-hewn wood; on one side of the stage is the hearth, on which a fire is burning; at the back the entrance-door, and on the left are steps leading to an inner room. The time is evening; night is fast closing in. The door opens, and a man, evidently in a state of extreme exhaustion, enters and throws himself down in front of the fire, with the words, "Whosoever house this is, here I must rest!" and faints away. The mistress of the house, Sieglinde, comes from the inner room, thinking it is her husband, and is surprised to find a stranger in the house. After she has given him some drink, she tells him, in reply to his inquiries, that she is the wife of Hunding, the owner of the house. Feeling refreshed, he rises to go. "Why go already—who pursues thee?" she asks. "Misfortune pursues me wherever I go," he replies; "I would keep it far from thee, lady." "Stay here, then," she says; "thou canst not bring unhappiness into the house where it always dwells." Hunding enters, and his wife tells him what has occurred. From this point the plot of the drama becomes exceedingly difficult to condense. In many places nearly every speech has a direct bearing on what follows. We must confine ourselves to a mere outline, and for fuller details refer our readers to the work itself. Hunding asks the stranger who he is, and receives for answer that he is a "Wölving," the son of Wölfe, and that he came

into the world with a twin sister. His father was at feud with the race of the Neidings; these had burnt down his house, killed his wife, and carried off his daughter. He, with his son (the speaker), fled into the forest; in a battle with the Neidings the latter was separated from his father, and had never seen him since. Misfortune pursues him everywhere, therefore he is called Wehwalt—the "woe-stricken." In reply to Hunding's inquiry how he had lost his weapons, he relates how it was in aiding a maiden who appealed to him for help against her relations, who were going to marry her by force to a man whom she did not love. In the fight the maiden was killed, and he, overpowered by numbers, lost his arms, was wounded, and put to flight. Hunding announces that he is one of the kindred of those with whom his guest had been fighting, and challenges him to single combat on the morrow. He and his wife then retire for the night to the inner chamber, leaving the stranger alone.

It is now night; the room is dark but for the dull glow of the expiring fire on the hearth. Left to himself, the stranger remembers how his father had promised him a sword in his deepest need, and reflects also on the evident unhappiness of his fair hostess. A sudden gleam of firelight falls on a spot of the ash trunk, in which the handle of a sword is clearly visible; then the fire goes out altogether, and there is total darkness. The door of the inner room opens gently, and Sieglinde comes out. She has drugged her husband's drink, to have the opportunity of saving her guest. She points to the sword in the trunk, and tells him how, at her wedding feast, when she was married by force to Hunding, an old man clothed in grey, a large hat covering one eye, came into the hall, holding a sword in his hand. This sword he thrust up to the hilt into the tree, declaring that it was intended for him alone who could draw it out. All the guests tried, but no one could move it. "Then I knew," says Sieglinde, "who it was that had placed the sword there, and for whom it was designed. Oh, could I but find him now! I should be sweetly revenged for all my past suffering and shame! Would my hero but come to me, my arm should embrace him!" The stranger announces himself as her deliverer; mutual explanations follow, and he declares himself her twin brother Siegmund, the "Walsung" (the son of Wälse), and, with a mighty wrench, draws the sword out of the stem. He names it "Nothing"—the "compeller"—and offers it as a *bridal* gift to Sieglinde, who, at his words, "Bride and sister art thou to thy brother; so flourish the race of the Walsungen!" sinks on his breast, and the curtain falls.

From this incestuous union it will be readily imagined that only misery could result; and the second act shows us the consequences that follow. The scene represents a wild mountain country, and we see Wotan, as the god of battles, in full armour, and Brinnhilde the Walküre, his daughter, also in full armour, in attendance upon him. Wotan, whose notions of morality (like those of the Roman Jupiter) would appear to have been of the laxest description, orders Brinnhilde to award the victory to Siegmund in the forthcoming combat between him and Hunding. Fricka approaches in a chariot drawn by two rams. As the protectress of the marriage tie, she has been appealed to by Hunding, and she comes to invoke summary vengeance on Siegmund and Sieglinde. Wotan takes their part, declaring that he considers a loveless marriage an unholy one. Fricka rates him soundly for his many conjugal infidelities. He replies that from the very union of which she complains deliverance will come to the gods; for "a hero is needed who, unprotected by the gods, shall be free from their authority; he only can do what, though the gods need it, they themselves are unable to accomplish." Fricka's urgency, however, at last prevails, and she obtains from her spouse a reluctant oath to withdraw his protection from the offending pair.

Fricka departs, and Brinnhilde approaches. To her Wotan tells his trouble. And here the connection of the present with the previous drama becomes apparent. Alberich, the Nibelung, designs to overthrow the gods. Wotan has learnt from Erda, the mother of the Fates, that if Alberich should obtain possession of the mighty ring, Walhalla is lost. Our readers will remember that the ring had not been restored to the Rhine-daughters, but given, with the rest of the treasure, to the giants. Fafner, having killed his brother, is now guarding the hoard. But against the race of giants Wotan himself is powerless, for he is allied with them by treaties. Only a hero, acting entirely without influence from the gods, can obtain the ring. Where is he to be found?

Horror-struck, Brinnhilde receives from Wotan the order to award the victory to Hunding. Vain are her efforts to reverse the decision. Siegmund and Sieglinde now approach—the latter overwhelmed with despair and remorse. Brinnhilde appears and announces to Siegmund his approaching end. A most touching and beautiful scene ensues, which, did our space permit, we would gladly quote entire. Siegmund inquires whether he will meet Sieglinde in Walhalla. Brinnhilde replies that she must still breathe the air of earth. "Then I follow thee not to Walhalla!" says Siegmund. "Thou

hast seen the Walküre; thou must follow her!" "I trust to my sword!" "He who gave it thee now takes its virtue from it." "Shame on him who gave it me in mockery!" Brünnhilde asks him to confide Sieglinde to her protection, but he declares that he will kill her rather than leave her behind, and draws his sword. Brünnhilde, deeply moved, promises him victory. Hunding approaches, and in the ensuing fight Brünnhilde covers Siegmund with her shield. Wotan appears from a cloud above, holding his spear towards Siegmund, whose sword breaks in half, and Hunding pierces him to the heart. Brünnhilde seizes the fainting Sieglinde and carries her off on her horse. Wotan makes a scornful gesture to Hunding, who falls dead on the ground at his words, "Go, slave! kneel before Fricka; tell her that Wotan's spear has avenged her wrongs. Go!" His wrath is then turned against the disobedient Walküre.

The third act shows us the summit of a mountain. A storm is raging, and by the flashes of lightning we see the eight Walküren, on horseback and in full armour, resting on their way to Walhalla, with slain warriors hanging over their saddles. To them Brünnhilde enters hastily, bearing Sieglinde on her horse. Wotan is pursuing her, and she appeals to her sisters in turn for a horse, to save the poor woman. In vain; none dare to disobey Wotan. Sieglinde implores Brünnhilde to kill her; but the latter tells her to live for the sake of the child that she is to bear. The maternal instinct awakes, and she cries, "Save me, and save my child!" There is but one place of safety, a place which Wotan always avoids—the forest where Fafner guards the Rhine-gold and the ring. Thither they direct her, and Brünnhilde comforts her with the assurance that she bears in her womb the noblest hero of the world. She gives her the broken pieces of the sword Nothung: "He who repairs the sword and wields it shall receive his name from me—Siegfried."

Sieglinde departs: in a terrific thunderstorm Wotan draws near. He casts off his disobedient daughter; no longer shall she be his "Wunschnädelchen," to fulfil his will; no longer a Walküre; she shall become a mere woman—"I banish thee from the mountain, I cast thee into a defenceless sleep, and the man that finds and wakes thee shall have thee!" The other Walküren fly in horror. Brünnhilde begs one favour of her father—to surround her with fire, that none but a brave hero may dare to wake her. Wotan relents so far; with a kiss on her eyes he brings sleep on her, lays her on a moss bank, closes her helmet, and covers her with her shield; then, turning the point of his spear towards a large rock, he calls the fire-god, Loge, to come forth; flames surround Brünnhilde, and with the words, "Let him who dreads the point of my spear never pass through this fire!" he departs.

Of the music which Wagner has fitted to this magnificent drama we are almost afraid to speak as we feel, lest we should be suspected of exaggeration. Our own impression is that, as a whole, it far surpasses anything else the composer has yet written. Like most of its author's works, it is in places very unequal; for example, the whole scene between Wotan and Fricka, in the second act, though undoubtedly truthful in expression, is, when merely read or played on the piano, unmistakably dry. As we have before had occasion to remark, however, it is not fair to judge of such music as this apart from its actual effect on the stage. On the other hand, there are portions of the work which we think fully equal to anything in the range of dramatic music. We know nothing more deeply impressive than the whole of the first act. On first making acquaintance with it, it haunted us for days, though it was merely the *mental effect* it had produced, and we could not recall a single phrase of the melody. But this is in strict accordance with Wagner's theory of composition. The duet between Siegmund and Sieglinde, which occupies the latter half of this act, may, for dramatic power and beauty, compare with the celebrated scene in the fourth act of the *Huguenots*, though Wagner will, perhaps, not feel much flattered by the comparison. Scarcely, if at all, inferior, is the exquisite scene near the close of the second act, between Brünnhilde and Siegmund. These portions of the work have, moreover, the advantage of "coming out" tolerably well on the piano; it is at least possible to get a fair idea of their effects. It is otherwise with the great scene of the "Walküren-Ritt," at the opening of the third act, and with the final scene of the opera. Here even the masterly pianoforte arrangement of Herr Klindworth can give but a most inadequate idea of the original, and as the full score of the opera is as yet unpublished, we seem to get but a glimpse of the effect. We can nevertheless see enough to pronounce *Die Walküre* not merely one of the finest and most original of Wagner's works, but one of the greatest dramatic compositions as yet produced.

The Life of J. SEBASTIAN BACH. An abridged Translation from the German of C. H. BITTER. By JANET E. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH. With Preface by Sir JULIUS BENEDICT. London: Houlston & Sons.

MOST students of German musical literature will be aware that

Bitter's life of Bach is one of the standard works on the subject. The original, however, in two tolerably large volumes, contains a large quantity of matter of little use or interest to the general reader, and no inconsiderable amount of "padding." Miss Kay-Shuttleworth has therefore, we think, done wisely in furnishing an abridged instead of a complete translation of the work. The present volume comprises, within the limits of some hundred and fifty pages, all the important facts in the biography of the great cantor, and a general account of his principal works. A complete catalogue of the whole of his known compositions is appended to the volume. This is translated from Bitter's work, but should have undergone revision at the hands of some one familiar with the originals, as the very mistakes are copied—to say nothing of such errors of translation as "clarinets" instead of "trumpets," for "clarini" (p. 127). Bitter's book, moreover, was issued in 1865, since which time the new volumes of the Bach Society's edition have added considerably to the number of published works. Should this little book reach a second edition, as it deserves to do, it would be worth while, for convenience of reference, to revise the catalogue. The preface, by Sir Julius Benedict, contains some very just remarks on the character and career of the great musician.

Music in the Western Church. A Lecture on the History of Psalmody, with Illustrations. By WILLIAM A. LEONARD. London: F. Pitman.

THIS little treatise contains much interesting and instructive matter relative to the subject on which it treats. Especially valuable for comparison and examination of the various styles of church music which obtained in different ages, are the musical illustrations. By their aid a fair idea can be obtained of the gradual development of church music from the earliest times to our own day. Of course an exhaustive treatise on the subject is not to be looked for in the reprint of a mere lecture; but the book is so good as to make us regret that it is not better. We must object to the chronological list of "composers for the church, &c.," showing "whose influence was at work at any particular time," as singularly incomplete. Why on earth such names as Dibdin, Auber, and Sir H. Bishop should be inserted in the list, when such composers as Leonardo Leo and Clari, among the older writers, and Michael Haydn and Schubert among the more modern, are omitted, passes our comprehension. We must also decidedly take exception to the following astounding statement on page 6, relative to the music of the ancient Greek tragedies:—"The style of music to which these Odes, &c., was set, is well shown in Mendelssohn's eight-part chorus (?) *Ædipus in Colonus*, which, though a beautiful composition, would still be unbearably monotonous if heard for one hour; at any rate, no conductor appears willing to make the experiment." Now, in the first place, we very much doubt whether such a thing as an "eight-part chorus" was ever known to the Greeks at all; the weight of evidence, at all events, seems against their using harmonised music. But, besides this, the music to *Ædipus* is purely Mendelssohnian in character, in spite of its antique colouring; while, as to the statement that no conductor is willing to make the experiment of producing it, the fact is that the work has been repeatedly performed in London, both at the Crystal Palace and, if we mistake not, by Mr. H. Leslie's choir. Such an incorrect statement ought not to go without contradiction.

SHEET MUSIC.—PIANO MUSIC.

Grand Military March, by BEETHOVEN, transcribed for the Piano by E. PAUER (Augener & Co.), is a very effective adaptation of the brilliant and spirited march which Beethoven composed for one of the Austrian military bands. It is very faithful to the original, and makes a capital piano piece.

"*Vivat Bacchus*," Rondo for the Piano, on an air by MOZART, composed by E. PAUER (Augener & Co.), is an excellently worked piece, the subject of which is taken from the Drinking Song in Mozart's *Seraglio*. We can heartily recommend it to teachers.

Quite as good in a different style is the transcription of *Adolar's Romance* in "*Euryanthe*," by E. PAUER (Augener & Co.), which we can also honestly recommend.

Ten Eclogues for the Piano, by W. J. TOMASCHEK, edited by E. PAUER (Augener & Co.), are very interesting specimens of the style of a too much neglected, if not altogether forgotten, composer. Tomaschek was, in the early part of the present century, a celebrated pianist, and numbered among his pupils Droyschok, Schulhoff, and Kuhe. These eclogues are distinguished not only for their musical beauty, but for their freshness and originality, and pianists in want of something new will do well to turn their attention to them. They are of only moderate difficulty.

Six Fantaisies de Salon, pour Piano, par MAURICE LEE

(Augener & Co.). We have before had occasion to speak favourably of Mr. Lee's drawing-room pieces, and the present series is in no way inferior to its predecessors. It is, therefore, only necessary to add that the subjects of these six fantasias are "La Manola," de Henrion; "Ah, cruel parting," Volkslied; "Une Nuit à Grenade," de Kreutzer; "Auf Flügeln des Gesanges," by Mendelssohn; Mendelssohn's "Midsummer Night's Dream," and Purcell's "Come unto these yellow sands."

We are really at a loss what to say with respect to the next two batches of piano pieces which lie before us, as they are from the pens of those prolific writers Messrs. SCOTSON CLARK and EDOUARD DORN. By the former we have five pieces—"Les Cloches du Soir," "Le Papillon," "La Zingara," "The Blue Bells of Scotland," and "Home, sweet home," and by the latter three—"Sea Dreams," "Faust" (Spohr's), and "Fra Diavolo" (Augener & Co.). We have so frequently had occasion to notice other works by the same writers, from which these differ, so far as we can see, in no material respect, that we can only say that teachers in search of novelty will find them useful as light drawing-room pieces.

"Bianca," Barcarolle, and "Le Chant des Feuilles," Idylle, pour Piano, par E. PALADILHE (Cramer & Co.), are two little pieces of only moderate difficulty, but of more than average merit.

"Triste Exil," Transcription, par HENRI ROSELLEN (Cramer & Co.), is pretty, but somewhat commonplace.

"Jeux d'Enfants," Etude variée, pour le Piano, par C. W. J. BECKER (Augener & Co.), is constructed on a not very original theme, but the variations are interesting and clever.

"The Haunting Strain," Melody, arranged for the Piano by TH. MAAS (Cramer & Co.), though we cannot say that it has haunted us, is pretty notwithstanding. But we are curious to know what language is "tree cordes" (sic), which occurs twice in the course of the piece.

Impromptu, for the Piano, by ALICE MARY SMITH (Cramer & Co.), is a very pleasing and well-written little piece.

We have three pieces for the piano, by M. LAFUENTE (Cramer & Co.). The first, "Le Bon Retour," Caprice, is pretty but not very original; the second, "La Fontaine," does not rise above the average; the third, "L'Etoile Rouge," Polka, is a good dancing-piece.

The Spinning Song from "Der Fliegende Holländer," transcribed by JULES BRISSAC (Cramer & Co.), is a capital arrangement of this popular melody, and not too difficult for average players.

"Le Jaguar," Valse pour le Piano, par CHEVALIER DE KONTSKI (Cramer & Co.), is a good showy piece, the principal subject of which is to be found note for note in the first movement of Weber's sonata in A flat.

"Lieder ohne Worte," for Piano or Harmonium, by C. A. EHRENFELCHER (Brewer & Co.). This piece, which is rather poor, is called "Lieder" on the cover, and "Lied" inside. Why?

Lastly, we have a number of pieces of dance music, which we must dismiss as briefly as possible. They are all very fair of their kind, though none are particularly striking. All are published by Cramer & Co., and the names are "The Aquarium Galop," by JAMES F. SIMPSON, "The Waratah Waltz," by JEANNETTE TALLERMANN, "The Linda Waltz," by C. H. R. MARRIOTT (which, by the way, is the best of the lot), and "The Little Guy Fawkes (Hippopotamus) Quadrilles," by J. BERTRAM. This last will be a special favourite with children, because of its illustrated title, and should be purchased by all who are anxious to see what the Hippopotamus does not look like.

SONGS.

"Murmuring Streamlets," Lullaby, by ODOARDO BARRI (Cramer & Co.), is a very graceful and pleasing little ballad, which shows considerable musical feeling.

"Meeting and Parting," Canzonet, by HERBERT BAINES (Cramer & Co.), is in no respect remarkable.

"By the Fire," Song, by M. E. DOORLY (Barbadoes: Bowen & Sons), is one of the most charming little songs we have met with for some time. The sentiment of the words is admirably echoed by the music.

"It is not always May," and "Abide with me," two Songs by DR. C. S. HEAP (Birmingham: Adams & Beresford), are both good in very different styles; the former is a spirited setting of Longfellow's verses, and the latter treats Lyte's well-known hymn. The only point to which we are inclined to take exception is the treatment of the last verse of this hymn, in which modulations are so freely introduced that we lose altogether the feeling of the original key.

"Lord, in youth's eager years," Recitative and Prayer from Gideon,

by CHARLES E. HORSLEY (Cramer & Co.), shows the skill of a practised musician, but is not otherwise, to our thinking, very striking.

"O let me dream that dream again," Song, by WILLIAM METCALFE (Cramer & Co.), is somewhat original, but not particularly pleasing.

"Lay of the Lost Doll," by CLEVELAND WIGAN (Lamborn Cock & Co.), is a very pleasing and simple little setting of a poem from Kingsley's "Water-Babies."

Curiously enough, we have also another setting of the same words, by ALFRED PLUMPTON (Cramer & Co.). For ourselves, we rather prefer Mr. Wigan's version; but both are good, and opinions will probably differ on the subject.

"Eastern Love-Song," by CLEVELAND WIGAN (Lamborn Cock & Co.), is a charming little piece, which we think is sure to be popular.

"Thoughts of Heaven," Sacred Song, by BERTHOLD TOURS (Duff & Stewart), and "Oh, come again, sweet love, in May," Duet, by the same (Lamborn Cock), are written with their composer's usual skill. The former is our favourite.

"Morning Dawns" ("Le Reveil" de Victor Hugo), Song, by B. LUTGEN (Augener & Co.), is a very good specimen of a French song. There is a piquancy both in rhythm and melody, which will be likely to make it popular.

Concerts, &c.

CRYSTAL PALACE.

MR. MANNS'S benefit concert, which may be regarded as the bridge between the classical symphonic concerts of winter and the lighter operatic entertainments of summer, partook largely of the character of both, and attracted an unusually large audience. The directors of long series of concerts seem to have found by experience that it is their best policy to make them as even as possible. It has been found that an unusually sensational and attractive concert of a series usually diminishes the attendance of the succeeding concert. Hence the usually level quality of the Crystal Palace and Monday Popular Concerts, the programmes of which generally seem to be drawn up under the idea that the introduction of some exceptionally attractive or unfamiliar work must be counterbalanced by works of an opposite character. For instance, a work by Schumann, Liszt, or Wagner is pretty sure to appear in company with works of the simplest and most elementary character, which those who care for the former least wish to hear. Whether this be a safe policy it is difficult to determine. If too strenuously adhered to, there is certainly the risk of failing to fully satisfy any one. To satisfy the tastes of all at a single concert attended by such large audiences as congregate at the Crystal Palace seems almost hopeless. To mix up ballads and operatic songs with the symphonies and overtures of the greatest masters, though common enough, is so incongruous, and it is so certain that those who care for the one do not care for the other, that it seems worth the consideration of the directors of these concerts whether it would not serve them better to divide them into two parts, giving the vocal music in one part and the instrumental in another, or to give alternate concerts of vocal and orchestral music.

The present was an exceptional occasion, and extreme pains were taken to conciliate the individual taste of every class of hearers. Thus, for the classicists there were Schubert's unfinished symphony in B minor, the overture and opening chorus from Mendelssohn's *Walpurgis Night*, and Beethoven's choral fantasia; with Mr. C. Hallé at the pianoforte, and the vocal parts in the hands of Mme. Otto-Alvesleben, Miss Bessie Goode, Miss Annie Butterworth, Messrs. Henry Guy, Wadmore, H. A. Pope, and the Crystal Palace Choir. For those who delight in the virtuosity of a violinist, a fantasia by Ernst was played by Mme. Norman-Néruda. For those who find their highest charm in the human voice, there was a varied selection of vocal music by Mesdames Otto-Alvesleben, Ostava Torriani, Sig. Agnesi and Mr. Sims Reeves. For those who have a leaning to the "future," there was the overture to *Tannhäuser*, which, whatever may be its fate in the future, has certainly established itself as a prime favourite of the present. The loud applause with which Mr. Manns was greeted on his appearance in the orchestra, as well as on the close of his entertainment, fully showed the estimation in which he is held here.

A look back at the past series of winter concerts seems to show that there has been no falling off either from the interest or the excellence of those of last year. In some respects an advance has been made. In no former season has so much attention been

bestowed upon the production of works by English composers. Among the most important of the works heard here for the first time may be enumerated Mr. Crowther Alwyn's Mass in F; J. Brahms's serenade, in D; Mr. Cowen's Festival overture and symphony, No. 2, in F; Mr. Gadsby's overture, *Andromeda*; Dr. Hiller's Dramatic fantasia; Henselt's pianoforte concerto, played by Mr. Oscar Beringer; Mr. Prout's organ concerto (Dr. Stainer); Julius Rietz's "Lustspiel" overture; Rubinstein's pianoforte concerto, No. 4, in D minor (Mr. Fritz Hartvigson); Mr. Shakespeare's concert overture in D; Schubert's symphony, No. 5, in B flat. Schumann's introduction and allegro for pianoforte, Op. 92 (Mme. Schumann); Mr. Wingham's Festival overture in C; and Wagner's overture to *Rienzi*. Interesting and comprehensive in their scope as these concerts have been, we cannot but think that room might have been found for a more adequate presentation of works of the modern school, as represented by Liszt, Berlioz, Wagner, &c., both with advantage to the Crystal Palace Company and to the satisfaction of the subscribers to their concerts.

The first of the summer series of concerts was given in the concert-room, instead of, as heretofore, in the central transept. The great bulk of the audience was doubtless attracted by the artists from Her Majesty's Opera, Mdle. Titiens, Mme. Trebelli-Bettini, Sig. Mongini, and Sig. Agnesi. For musicians the interest of the concert centred in Dr. Hans von Bülow's playing of Beethoven's concerto, No. 4, in G major. Speaking of its revival by Mendelssohn at Leipzig, in 1836, just eighteen years after it had first been played by Beethoven himself, Schumann writes: "This day Mendelssohn played the G major concerto of Beethoven, with a power and finish that transported us all. I received a pleasure from it such as I have never enjoyed, and I sat in my place without moving a muscle or even breathing—afraid of making the least noise." Schumann's account of Mendelssohn's rendering of the work may fairly be applied to Von Bülow's, with the addition that the two cadenzas introduced by him, and which were of his own composing, were admirably suited to display the genius of the modern "Broadwood," and at the same time in thorough keeping with the general character of the work. No less a treat, but one of a different kind, was his playing of Chopin's nocturno, in D flat, Op. 27, and Liszt's "Chant Polonoise varié et Mazurka brillante."

* When speaking of the performance of the choral symphony in our last issue, we felt constrained to express our dissatisfaction with the tone of Mr. Mann's new oboist, Herr Uschmann. Though the justice of our remarks has been fully admitted, it has been met with an explanation to the effect that Herr Uschmann, a newcomer, was labouring under great disadvantages, owing to the pitch of the orchestra being so different to that of his instrument, that he was obliged to pare down his reed and thus spoil its tone. Herr Uschmann comes to us with the best credentials, having for three years filled the post of first oboist at the far-famed concerts of the Gewandhaus, Leipzig. It is but due to him to state that subsequent hearings have removed the unfavourable impression he at first created.

DR. HANS VON BÜLOW'S RECITALS.

THE success which has attended Dr. von Bülow's three "Recitals" has been one quite unprecedented within our recollection. We can recall no instance of a pianist so rapidly gaining the ear of the many. On no former occasion of an afternoon performance have we seen St. James's Hall so densely packed as it was at his third and last recital. The amount and variety of music brought forward, and literally recited by him from memory, is truly astonishing. Bach has been represented by his three preludes and fugues for organ, in B minor, A minor, and E minor, transcribed for pianoforte by Liszt; Beethoven, by his sonatas, Op. 27, No. 2, "Moonlight," Op. 33, No. 3, in E flat, Op. 81, "Les Adieux, L'Absence, et le Retour," Op. 110, in A flat, and Op. 111, in C minor; Scarlatti, by his "Fuga del Gatto;" Mozart, by a "Minuet et Gigue;" and Schumann, by his "Carnaval a Vienne," Op. 26. The illustrations of Chopin, numbering at least a dozen, and therefore too numerous to recapitulate, were among the most welcome, as likely to tend to rescue this composer from the unmerited neglect which of late years he has met with in England. Among the works of living composers there have been several by Liszt, a set of twenty-five variations and fugue on an air of Handel, by J. Brahms, Op. 24, an andante and toccata, Op. 12, by Rheinberger, a gavotte, by Gotthard, and a suite, Op. 27, by J. Raff, all of which proved more or less remarkable as compositions, and in Dr. von Bülow's hands were conducive of extreme pleasure and satisfaction. That Dr. von Bülow's playing has given unqualified satisfaction to all cannot be said. Since there are those still to be found among musicians, who professedly do not admire Schubert, Schumann, or Mme. Schumann's playing, this is not a matter which surprises us. It is

easily accounted for: here in England for many years past we have been taught to regard the school of J. B. Cramer, as it has been handed down to us by Cipriani Potter, Sterndale Bennett, and others, as the school *par excellence* of pianoforte playing. In Germany a school of a warmer and more poetical temperament has at the same time been gradually growing up. It has occasionally been brought before us both by executants and composers: that we should readily accept it was not to be expected. It has been reserved for Dr. von Bülow to bring it before us in its most convincing light.

Henceforth a revolution in the style of our pianoforte playing may be looked for. As it has often been remarked that Mme. Schumann's warmth of style, since her acceptance here as the greatest pianist that has regularly visited us of late years, has influenced that of several of our representative resident pianists, so it may safely be predicted that the astonishing success Dr. von Bülow has met with during his late visit to us will be followed by like results, but in a more extended degree. That henceforth he may be looked for as an annual visitor is much to be wished.

PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY.

THE announcement of Dr. Hans von Bülow's first appearance in England attracted an unusually numerous audience to the third concert. Though indisposed, and therefore not in his "best form" of playing, the touch of the master was, nevertheless, at once apparent in his rendering of Beethoven's concerto in E flat. The audience, at all times more ready to recognise merit in an executant who comes before them for the first time, than in a composer who is strange to them, evinced their satisfaction with the utmost warmth. After his playing subsequently of Bach's chromatic fantasia and fugue in D minor, their enthusiasm far exceeded anything of the kind we have ever witnessed at a Philharmonic concert. After three recalls, he was compelled, notwithstanding the late hour of the evening, to return to the piano, and gave with striking effect the two "Passepieds" from Bach's "English" Suite in E minor. From this moment, whatever critics bound down by canons of conventionality might say, his success in England was fully assured. On each subsequent occasion of his appearance this has become the more apparent. Of his artistic career and characteristics as an executant we have spoken in another column; and further comment we reserve for our notice below of his "Recitals." The symphonies brought forward were Haydn's in G (letter Q), known also as the "Oxford," from its having been composed for the Oxford Commemoration of 1791, and Mendelssohn's *Reformation*. The overtures were Sir W. Sterndale Bennett's "Naiades" and Wagner's *Fliegende Holländer*. Both were welcome, but it was too bad to delegate so important, so picturesque and comparatively unfamiliar a work as that of Wagner's to the tail of an over-long programme. The vocalists were Mme. Otto-Alvesleben, and Mdle. Gelmina Valdi.

The novelty of the fourth concert was a violin-concerto, in G minor, composed by Mr. G. A. Macfarren expressly for Herr Ludwig Straus, by whom it was performed in masterly style. concise in the form, lying gratefully for the soloist, and generally agreeable to listen to, it is a work which does honour to its composer; but the applause which it evoked must be put down to patriotism rather than to the exciting quality of the work itself. This might have been intended for the executant, but with his usual modesty Herr Straus declined to accept it for himself, and it did not cease till the composer was led up to the orchestra to bow his acknowledgments. It is not often in these days that a flute player appears as a soloist at classical concerts. On the present occasion Mr. Oluf Svendsen came forward as an able exponent of the Andante Rondo from Molique's Flute Concerto, Op. 69. Though, from a musical point of view, such works are not generally among the most interesting, it would be well for our orchestras were the members of the wind department more frequently admitted to appear as soloists, for nothing tends so much as an encouragement to further improvement as the chance of sometimes appearing in such a capacity. The symphonies were Mozart's, in C, not the more familiar *Jupiter*, but that variously known as No. 6, and as Op. 34 in Breitkopf and Härtel's edition, and which Ferdinand Hiller has aptly suggested might as appropriately be christened the *Funo*, as the other (with the fugue) is known as the *Jupiter* and Beethoven's in C minor. The overtures were Cherubini's *Anacraon*, and Mozart's *Le Nozze di Figaro*; the vocalists, Mdle. Alwina Valleria and Mdle. Justine Macvitz, neither of whom, whatever may be the estimation in which they are held at Her Majesty's Opera, appeared to make much impression upon a Philharmonic audience.

WAGNER SOCIETY.

THE third concert, given under the direction of Mr. E. Dannreuther, was quite as interesting and as great a success as either of

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its predecessors. It commenced with the overture to *Der Fliegende Holländer*, which had already been attempted on several previous occasions in London, but only now for the first time received full justice. Like a true prophet as he is, Liszt predicted twenty years ago that this overture, by reason of its contents and form and the difficulty of understanding its meaning, would not attain such rapid popularity, and be so readily accepted as the overture to *Tannhäuser*, or the prelude to *Lohengrin*. Nevertheless, the gloomy picture it presents, with its strongly marked colouring, and strangely rounded outline, its dense clouds and uncertain gleams of light, its forcible expression of tortured feeling, is scarcely less a masterpiece. What a deeply affecting drama it represents to us! The bursting and dashing in pieces of everything around! The convulsions of nature and of a despairing heart! Stormy waves and stormy passions! Hoarse growling thunder and imprecations! A flood stirred up, a soul stirred up! The hissing of a hurricane, and the furious rage of scorn! It may best be regarded as a musical narration of the Dutchman's woes and his final redemption; but to enter thoroughly into its meaning and to appreciate it fully, one must be familiar with the drama to which it forms the prelude. It was followed by the "Procession Music," Elsa's song—"Euch Lüften," and the introduction to the third act from *Lohengrin*, Elizabeth's prayer—"Allmächtige Jungfrau," and the overture to *Tannhäuser*, which had all been heard at previous concerts and were repeated in compliance with numerous requests. As on the former occasions, the audience insisted upon a repetition of the instrumental selection from *Lohengrin*, recalled M^{me}. Otto Alvesleben after each of her songs, and would have gladly heard the overture to *Tannhäuser* a second time. Mr. Dannreuther then resigned the baton to Dr. Hans von Bülow, whose method of conducting is as remarkable as his skill as a pianist. Trusting to his memory, which is prodigious, as he does in his pianoforte playing, he conducts even entire operas of Wagner without a score to refer to. First, however, he played Beethoven's fifteen variations in E flat, on a theme which occurs in the music to *Prometheus*, and subsequently in the finale to the "Eroica" symphony in a manner which excited the audience to the highest pitch of enthusiasm. Then followed what to those who have studied Wagner most deeply must have proved the most interesting item of the evening's entertainment, viz.: the introduction and the finale to the third act of *Tristan und Isolde*. With this stupendous work, Wagner may truly be said to have inaugurated a new era in art. Here he is heard at his grandest. As did the *Meistersinger* selection at the two previous concerts, so again these two excerpts from *Tristan* admirably served to illustrate the master's later manner. The "Huldigung's Marsch," a gorgeous idealisation of military music, written in homage to the King of Bavaria on his accession to the throne, March 10th, 1864, but for the first hearing of which in England we are indebted to Mr. Walter Bache, concluded the evening with the utmost éclat.

MUSICAL UNION MATINÉES.

"SIGNOR" JAELL, as Professor Ella announced him, probably on account of his having been born at Trieste, but who, on the ground of his musicianship, which is thoroughly German, should have been announced as "Herr," was the lion of the third matinée. Justly a favourite here, he has on various occasions been the means of introducing new works by Schumann, Gade, Brahms, &c. At his suggestion, Schubert's quintet, in A major, Op. 114, for pianoforte, violin, viola, violoncello and contra-basso, was played here for the first time. Though not one of the most striking of Schubert's concerted works, its generally melodious character, and the variations on the Lied "Die Forelle," fully justified its revival. As soloist Herr Jaell was heard to the fullest advantage in an impromptu in C sharp minor, Op. 129, by Stephen Heller, a nocturne in E flat, by Chopin, and in the scherzino from Schumann's "Faschings-schwank aus Wien," for which, on its being redemanded, he substituted another movement from the same work. With M. Lasserre he was associated in Mendelssohn's "Variations Concertants," in D, Op. 17, for violoncello and pianoforte, and with M. Vieuxtemps in an aria and gavotte, from a suite by M. Vieuxtemps—a quaint and highly effective work in happy imitation of the old Italian school. Beethoven's quartett in C, Op. 59, No. 3, the last of the three dedicated to Prince Rasoumofsky, was finely played by M^{ms}. Vieuxtemps, Wiener, Van Waeleghem and Lasserre. Welcome at any time, it proved an unusual treat to Professor Ella's patrons, for it had not been heard at the *Musical Union* during the last twenty years, the last occasion being in 1853.

MR. C. HALLÉ'S RECITALS.

As was the case last year, Mr. C. Hallé has again associated himself

with M^{me}. Norman-Néruda, Herr Straus and Signor Piatti. As concerted works predominate at these entertainments, of which he has commenced a series of eight, they now partake more of the character of concerts than of "recitals" properly so called. A special interest attaches to them from the promise that at each, one or more of the concerted pieces will invariably be selected from works belonging to the modern German school—from Schumann to Brahms, Raff, &c. Already several unfamiliar works, the importance of which fully justified Mr. Hallé in bringing them forward, have been heard to the delight and instruction of his audience. Among the most important may be named a trio, in B major, Op. 8, a quartett, in G minor, Op. 25, and a quintett, in F minor, Op. 35, by Brahms, and a trio, in G major, Op. 112, by J. Raff. In other respects Mr. Hallé's programmes have been happily varied by the introduction of works, both solo and concerted, by Bach, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Schumann, Chopin, &c.

ROYAL ALBERT HALL.

WITH daily orchestral and vocal concerts, and frequent performances by the Royal Albert Hall Choral Society, under the direction of Mr. Joseph Barnby, with operatic concerts by the artists of Her Majesty's Theatre, under the direction of Mr. W. G. Cusins, and other occasional entertainments, it is quite impossible to keep account of the musical activity manifested here of late. The late revival by Mr. Barnby of Handel's *Belshazzar*, should not pass unnoticed, and we hope that an early repetition of it will enable us to revert to it. It should be added, too, that the daily orchestral performances, which have been varied and enterprising in character, have, during the last month been supplemented by concerts of the Royal Albert Hall Choral Society on Saturday evenings, a speciality of which, with a view to the convenience of those coming from a distance, consists in the fact of their commencing at seven o'clock, and terminating at nine. At the first, *Athalie*, *Lorely*, and other favourite works by Mendelssohn were heard; the second, which took place on the Queen's birthday, was mainly devoted to popular ballads and part-songs, the only orchestral works being a "Birthday March," by C. A. Barry—the first instalment of the promised new works by English composers—and Weber's *Jubilee* overture, both appropriate to the occasion.

MR. ARTHUR J. BARTH'S concert took place at St. George's Hall, on April 26th—just too late for notice in our last number. The principal pieces of the very excellent programme were Mendelssohn's trio in C minor, in which Mr. Barth was assisted by Messrs. Pollitzer and Paque; Chopin's polonaise for piano and violoncello; Schubert's Rondo Brilliant for piano and violin; and Beethoven's great sonata, Op. 53, admirably played by Mr. Barth, a pianist of no mean ability, who also gave two short solos by Schumann. The vocal music was contributed by M^{me}. Florence Lancia, Miss L. Braham, Miss Jessie Royd, and Mr. J. W. Turner.

Miss Agnes Zimmermann gave her evening concert at the Hanover Square Rooms, on April 29th, assisted by M^{me}. Norman-Néruda and Messrs. Straus and Daubert in the instrumental department, and by Miss Abbie Whinery and M^{me}. Anna Regan-Schimon (the latter in place of Mr. Santley, who was indisposed) as vocalists. Miss Zimmermann has been so frequently heard in public that it is superfluous to do more than allude to the excellence of her playing. We think it, however, to be regretted that she should have selected for her only solo so comparatively uninteresting a piece as Handel's overture to *Ariodante*, clever though her transcription for the piano certainly is. The concerted music comprised her own musicianly "Suite" in five movements, for piano, violin, and violoncello, Brahms's interesting though far too diffuse piano quartett in G minor, Mendelssohn's variations in D for piano and violoncello, and Schubert's rondo in B minor for piano and violin.

Mr. Ridley Prentice's evening concert took place at Hanover Square Rooms, on the 14th ult. It commenced with a posthumous quartett movement in C minor, by Schubert, only recently published, and which on its first appearance was noticed in our review columns. It was played (we believe for the first time in this country) by Messrs. H. Holmes, Folkes, Hann, and Pettit, and, as it fully deserved, met with a hearty reception. Mr. Prentice played Beethoven's sonata in F minor, Op. 57, exceedingly well. Among other pieces performed were Weber's sonata for piano and clarinet (Messrs. Prentice and Lazarus), Mendelssohn's variations in D for piano and violoncello, and Prout's piano quintett in G, Op. 3. The vocalists were Miss Katherine Poyntz, M^{me}. Patey (who was encored in a very pleasing sacred song by the concert-giver), and Mr. W. H. Cummings.

A series of five concerts, which, owing to the locality in which they were given, have not met with the notice they deserved, has

just been brought to a close at the Gloucester Hall, Brixton Road. They were given by Mr. J. B. Wade Thirlwall, who showed his skill both as a violinist and a singer. The pressure on our space will only allow us to name the chief works brought forward. These were a trio by Brod, for piano, oboe, and bassoon; a trio in D for piano, violin, and violoncello, by Mr. Thirlwall; Prout's piano quintett in G; Beethoven's sonata in D for piano and violin; Mayseder's duet in G for two violins; and two movements of a quintett by Reicha, for flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, and horn. So much novelty is seldom to be met with in suburban concerts, and Mr. Thirlwall deserves great credit for his excellent selection.

Musical Notes.

THE Brixton Choral Society, conducted by Mr. William Lemare, gave a performance of Mendelssohn's *Elijah* on the 26th ult. The principal vocalists announced were Mme. Florence Lancia, Miss Adelaide Newton, Mr. Wilbye Cooper, and Mr. Robert Hilton.

Mlle. SOPHIA FLORA HEILBRON gave a farewell concert on the 7th ult. As the programme was not advertised, and the young lady's dress was, we conclude that this was considered of the greater importance, and have therefore much pleasure in stating that it was on view previous to the concert at a fashionable West-end milliner's! The advertisement suggests a curious speculation as to whether performers are paid to wear particular dresses, just as they are paid to sing royalty songs!

THE third of Mr. Parker's Subscription Concerts at Epsom, on the 22nd ult., brought several interesting works to a hearing. The programme included Mozart's seldom-performed trio in E; Beethoven's sonata in G, Op. 30, No. 3, for piano and violin; Schubert's impromptu in C minor, capitolly played by the concert-giver; Mendelssohn's variations in D for piano and violoncello; Haydn's sparkling piano trio in C, No. 3; and a new and interesting piano duet (MS.), by Mr. Charles E. Stephens, played by the composer and Mr. Prout. The vocalist was Miss Tomsett, a student, we understand, of the London Academy of Music.

At a recent concert (on the 20th ult.), by Mr. George Tolhurst's choir, at the Lower Norwood Institute, were introduced part songs by Gounod, Macfarren, Benedict, and Dr. Stewart; also a selection, including a dozen "numbers" from the conductor's much talked of oratorio, *Ruth*. The attendance, we hear, was numerous, and the music an undoubted success.

A SERIES of programmes and newspaper reports have been sent to us of Mr. and Mme. Fletcher's fortnightly chamber concerts at Southampton. We have not space to notice them in detail; but they deserve a word of hearty commendation for the excellent selection of music. Besides the standard works of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven, we find such pieces as the quartetts of Onslow, Fesca, Krommer, and others.

THE Glasgow Musical Festival will take place in the first week of November, and is to consist of six grand concerts. First concert, Mendelssohn's *Elijah*; second, miscellaneous works; third, Sir M. Costa's *Eli*; fourth, miscellaneous works; fifth, Mr. H. Smart's *Jacob* (specially composed for the festival) and other works; and sixth, the *Messiah*. The artists already engaged are:—Mlle. Titiens, Mlle. Carola, Miss Edith Wynne, Mme. Trebelli-Bettini, Mme. Patey, Mr. Vernon Rigby, Mr. Edward Lloyd, Mr. Santley, and Mr. Lewis Thomas.

WE are requested to announce that Mr. Berthold Tours has resigned his position in the orchestras of the Royal Italian Opera and the Sacred Harmonic Society, for the purpose of devoting the whole of his time to composition and tuition.

UPON the recommendation of Sir Frederick Gore Ouseley, Sir Julius Benedict, Sir George J. Elvey, and Sir John Goss, the degree of Doctor in Music has been conferred upon Mr. C. G. Verrinder, Mus. Bac. Oxon., by the Archbishop of Canterbury.

CHERUBINI's 2nd Requiem Mass in D minor, for male voices only, was executed for the first time in this country on Monday, the 5th ult., at Farm Street Church. It produced the deepest impression on all who heard it, especially the Dies Iræ and the Agnus Dei.

ON the 1st, and, and 3rd of this month, the 50th Lower Rhenish Musical Festival takes place at Aix-la-Chapelle, under the direction of Hof-Kapellmeister Dr. Julius Rietz and Musikdirector F. Breunung. The following artists have promised their assistance:—the ladies Clara Schumann, Maria Wildt, Gompertz-Bettelheim, and Messrs. Max Hubert, Adolph Schulze, and Joh. Lauterbach (violin). The programme will be—1st day, festival overture; Beethoven's

Messiah. 2nd day, "Credo" from B minor Mass by Bach; "Der büssende David," Cantata by Mozart; the 9th symphony by Beethoven. 3rd day, Jubilee overture by Rietz; overture, *Midsummer Night's Dream*, Mendelssohn; piano concerto by Schumann; 9th violin concerto by Spohr; vocal pieces by Haydn, Gluck, Weber, Franz, Schubert, and others.

WAGNER's *Walküre* has just been revived, with great success, at Munich.

APPOINTMENT.—Mr. Charles F. Combe, choirmaster of St. Olave's, Southwark, and St. John's, Pancras, has been appointed also choirmaster to St. James's, Paddington.

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